

ISSUE 8

# GRADUATE COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

The newsletter for the research student community



## *Curiosity Carnival*

Brookes' students inspire at European Researchers' Night



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# News

## Curiosity Carnival

### Brookes' PhD students inspire at Oxford's celebration of European Researchers' Night



On Friday 29 September, several research students from Oxford Brookes showcased their research at the Curiosity Carnival; Oxford's celebration of European Researchers' Night. The initiative is a Europe-wide event dedicated to explaining research through fun, interactive learning, and 'Curiosity Carnival' was the first one ever to be held in Oxford. Led by the University of Oxford working together with Oxford Brookes and MRC Harwell, the Curiosity Carnival featured a huge variety of free activities and events for all ages.

Among those speaking at the event was Salem Al Qudwa, PhD by design student from the School of Architecture, who illustrated the importance of space planning and design and addressed issues such as the housing crisis. Salem said: "We're having a housing crisis; people need to understand the importance of architecture in order to offer shelter and support. I had lots of interest in my work from families coming to visit along with their children, who enjoyed playing with the wooden architectural models. I spoke about my research by design in a simple way in order to give visitors a better understanding. They were very engaged and interested and I was in a great location at the Ashmolean Museum."

Research student Indroneel Chatterjee, along with colleagues from the Oxford Brookes Business School, discussed his research into addressing global food shortages with crickets and other edible insects. Indroneel's research looks at the feasibility of insects for human

consumption (entomophagy) and the ways we might overcome our inhibitions about eating them.

School of Arts research student, Peta Lloyd, also presented at the event. Peta is part of the Contemporary Arts Research Unit at Brookes and presented her research entitled 'Text+Body+Action=TextAct'. Reading text and image in Live Art examines if and how text and image can work together in a performative mode and the Curiosity Carnival provided an excellent opportunity for Peta to trial actions in a public arena. As well as two new short pieces created for the event, she also presented work which had been shown to self-selecting 'art' audiences either in gallery locations or at Oxford Brookes. Peta said: "Curiosity Carnival was a great opportunity to try out work in front of the general public, gauge their reactions to a range of performances and respond to their questions and comments."

Professor Linda King, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Global Partnerships at Oxford Brookes University said: "We were excited to be a part of Oxford's Curiosity Carnival, joining hundreds of other European cities on the same night celebrating research and its impact. The event involved an enormous amount of development and planning led by the University of Oxford and we enjoyed working with them and MRC Harwell to put on a range of activities across the city."

Picture copyright: University of Oxford, Ian Wallman

Graduate College Newsletter is the newsletter of the research student community at Oxford Brookes University.

Thank you to all students and staff who have contributed to this edition of the Newsletter.

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We reserve the right to edit contributions before we publish and to refuse editorial items.

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Contributions are welcome from all sections of the University and should be sent to: [asa-gcnewsletter@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:asa-gcnewsletter@brookes.ac.uk)





## Macbeth at Oxford Castle

Cheryl Birdseye, research student from the Department of English and Modern Languages, had the exciting opportunity to work on Macbeth as part of the Oxford Shakespeare Festival.

Summer Shakespeare has established itself as an Oxford staple, with lots of talented local theatre groups treading the boards throughout July and August with favourites from Shakespeare's canon. Summer 2017 marked Cheryl's third year with Siege Theatre, as part of the Oxford Shakespeare Festival, and she was thrilled to be given the role of Assistant Director, working alongside the Director, Michael Speight, and a fantastic cast. Cheryl's research focuses on 'The Rise of Female Testimony on the Early Modern Stage' and the festival allowed her to combine her research interests in early modern drama with her love of producing live theatre.

The production took place in the courtyard of Oxford Castle Unlocked – a fantastic venue for the brooding fortress of the Macbeths as they navigate Scotland's hierarchy, removing all those who stand in the way of the throne. Although a less supernatural interpretation of the play, it had a nod to the reality of historical witchcraft accusations, which often targeted the outcasts and social undesirables of communities.

Macbeth holds a certain notoriety as a "cursed" play, with many theatre-goers and producers refusing to utter its name inside a performance space. Nevertheless, excluding one smashed window and a sword-inflicted wound in the final performance, the shows were blessed with good weather and several sell-out audiences. Cheryl said "We are looking forward to returning to the Oxford Shakespeare Festival with our 2018 summer show – watch this space!"

You can follow Siege Theatre and the Oxford Shakespeare Festival on Facebook and Twitter: [@SiegeTheatre](#) [@shakespeareox](#)

## Doctorate in Nursing welcomes first cohort

In September 2017, the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences welcomed its first cohort on the Professional Doctorate in Nursing (DNurs). The DNurs is an innovative addition to the doctoral programmes within The Oxford Institute of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Research. It is a part-time course running over five years and provides nurses with an opportunity to explore their research ideas during the taught modular aspect of the programme before commencing their own primary research in year three. The focus of the programme is research knowledge and training and it has been designed to enhance the clinical role of the nurse through research and evidence base. Within the health sector, there is a growth in the development of doctorally prepared nurses who wish to remain in clinical practice rather than moving to an academic career. The Professional Doctorate is designed for professionals who wish to apply research knowledge and skills within their professional practice, rather than gaining research skills to develop a research career.



## Disney internship

Suman Saha, research student in the School of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics, recently undertook a three month internship at Disney Research Zürich (DRZ). He worked under the supervision of Dr Romann Weber, a research scientist who leads the Machine Learning group at DRZ. As part of his PhD, Suman works to solve human action detection problems from videos using ML and CV algorithms. During his internship at Disney, he worked to solve a completely different problem - audience behaviour analysis - by learning and applying techniques from ML and CV; the main domains of his PhD research.

The project, entitled 'Unsupervised and semi-supervised learning of audience facial expressions using deep generative models', proposed a facial expression detection model which can detect audience facial attributes (such as smiling, engaged, disengaged and yawning) from video streams. This can be used to infer which parts of the movie the audience (or sub-groups of the audience) does and does not like, and is beneficial to writers, directors, marketers and advertisers alike.

## Brookes PhD Alumna awarded fellowship

Oxford Brookes scientist, and PhD Alumna, Dr Lisa Ayers has been awarded an NHS fellowship for 'inspiring female healthcare scientists'. Lisa was selected as one of only four recipients of the award which attracted over 50 applications.

The Chief Scientific Officer's WISE Fellowship Programme is a bespoke 12 month initiative, in partnership with WISE; a campaign for gender balance in science, technology and engineering. The Fellowship includes a career development programme and aims to inspire the next generation of female healthcare scientists to gain leadership experience and showcase the wide variety of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) based careers within the NHS.

Lisa, who is a Clinical Scientist, Immunology with the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, as well as a STEM ambassador, commented "I am excited about the opportunities this fellowship offers. I have been very fortunate to be surrounded by inspiring female role models throughout my career who have supported my aspirations and I now wish to use this experience to encourage more young women into the field of healthcare science".



## OxINMAHR students win travel scholarships

Two Brookes' research students, Lauren Harding and Neesha Oozageer Gunowa, both from the Oxford Institute of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Research (OxINMAHR), were delighted to be awarded travel scholarships through the Florence Nightingale Foundation (<http://www.florence-nightingale-foundation.org.uk/>).

The Florence Nightingale Travel Scholarships provide an opportunity to study practice elsewhere in the UK or overseas in order to enhance care in the UK. The scholarships are available to Nurses and Midwives who have current registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and are awarded for projects connected with the applicant's field of work, which will benefit their patients or service users, as well as the profession more widely.

Lauren applied to look at the role of Japanese public health nurses in identifying and working with maltreated children of school age, with a particular emphasis on child sexual abuse and exploitation. She will be travelling to Tokyo at the beginning of March 2018 for two weeks, visiting medical and nursing universities, school settings and meeting public health nurses. Her aim is to bring back new learning and share it with both Oxford Brookes and her colleagues in the Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, where she works as a school nurse on a sessional basis.

Neesha's overall goal from the travel scholarship is to carry out an international comparison of the education delivered to student nurses within Higher Education Institutions surrounding identification of pressure injuries amongst people from diverse backgrounds. In April 2018, Neesha will be visiting: John Hopkins University, Baltimore; University of Los Angeles, California; and Middlesex University, London. Congratulations to both Lauren and Neesha; we look forward to hearing all about their experiences!

## Young Expert in the School of the Built Environment

Daniela Gamper, PhD student in the School of the Built Environment, recently attended the UNESCO Meeting of European World Heritage Associations and was delighted to be appointed as a Young Expert by the UNESCO Commission Germany, due to her expertise in the fields of sustainable tourism development, ICT and destination management. Daniela was among more than 80 participants from 21 countries, comprising senior representatives of the UNESCO, several European World Heritage Associations, World Heritage experts, government authorities and other stakeholders.

Daniela described her appointment as Young Expert and her participation at the official UNESCO meeting as "an incredible honour and privilege. The meeting constituted an enormously powerful platform to network and exchange opinions as well as research ideas and meet opinion leaders of the European World Heritage scene. This meeting, under the motto 'Sharing Heritage' was truly all about sharing - heritage, ideas, experience, knowledge and contacts - to create a more connected and sustainable future of Europe; on the basis of our common heritage and by the means of modern communication and cooperation".



# Conference Success!

We hear from research students across the University about conferences they have recently organised, attended or presented at, and how they benefited from the experience.



## School of Education student attends ESERA Summer School and Conference

Sally Howard, PhD student in the School of Education, was delighted to have her proposal accepted to attend the highly sought after European Science Education Research Association (ESERA) biennial Summer School in August 2016. Sally was one of just two UK students to be offered this opportunity to work with international experts and other PhD students researching science education. Sally's time at the ESERA Summer School (held at the University of South Bohemia, Czech Republic) helped to galvanise her thoughts and she was thrilled when her proposal to present at the ESERA Conference, held in August 2017, was accepted.

ESERA was set up in 1995 to enhance the range and quality of research training in science education in Europe. Both the conference and Summer School represented the professional interest of science education researchers and sought to relate research to policies and practice of science education. It aimed to actively foster links between expert researchers, in Europe and elsewhere in the world, and early career researchers.

The five day ESERA conference was held in Dublin and co-hosted by EPI-STEM (University of Limerick) and CASTel (Dublin City University). The theme, 'Research, Practice and Collaboration in Science Education', highlighted the need in contemporary science education research to reflect on different approaches to enhance knowledge and understanding of learning processes.

Each day of the conference was filled with an inspiring mix of large formal key note speeches, smaller special interest's groups, oral presentations of research papers as well as a number of poster presentations. During the conference, Sally had the pleasure of meeting high profile key researchers in her area of interest. Sally said of her experience that while exhausting, the opportunity to engage in discussion with experts and peers was hugely stimulating, supportive and highly motivating. She left with a renewed vigour to get back to the next phase of data analysis.



## Inaugural address at Oxford Sikh Society conference

Nadia Singh, PhD student from the Department of Accounting, Finance and Economics, along with Professor Pritam Singh, recently presented the inaugural address at the Oxford Sikh Society conference at St Antony's College, University of Oxford. The conference was centred on the theme of Sikhism and Gender and the address was titled *The Lesser Child: An evaluation of the discrimination against the girl child at the household level in Punjab*. The paper explored the complex interlinkages between sex ratios and indicators of child care, nutrition and wellbeing at the household level. The paper critically evaluated conditional cash transfer schemes as a means for ensuring better care and nourishment for girl children from resource poor families. The inaugural address was based on a recent peer reviewed research paper published by the authors in the Journal of Punjab Studies.



## Human Adaptation and Diversity Conference

In November 2017, Sophie Edwards, research student from the Department of Social Sciences, presented at the Human Adaptation conference at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. Organised by the Oxford Bioanth Initiative and the Society for the Study of Human Biology, this open event catered not only to researchers from a diverse range of fields, but also to the wider general public who were able to interact and discuss ongoing projects.

Situated by the marsupial exhibition, and a particularly popular taxidermy otter, numerous weekend visitors to the Museum mused through the poster displays, asked questions regarding the specific topic at hand, and were mostly interested in hearing about present-day, ongoing research. Sophie presented a poster on her interdisciplinary research examining extant hominoid morphology and how it relates to contemporary habitats. Sophie had the opportunity to discuss her research in Paleoanthropology with fellow scholars, whose constructive and positive criticisms have served to better her methodology.

The highlight of this event was a talk given by Rob Foley, a lecturer at Cambridge University and Leverhulme Professor of Human Evolution, whose presentation discussed the complex route that human evolution has taken, from both an archaeological and biological background. Sophie said; "As any student of anthropology knows, Rob Foley is hailed as somewhat of a celebrity in this field, so it was an exceptional occasion to attend a lecture of his".

We are always looking for research students' news and success stories to feature in the Graduate College Newsletter. Please send any contributions to [asa-gnewsletter@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:asa-gnewsletter@brookes.ac.uk)

## Punjab Research Group Conference

Brookes' research student, Rajkamal Singh Mann, organised a successful one day conference on behalf of the Punjab Research Group (PRG), held at Oxford Brookes University in October 2017. The PRG was established as an inclusive and all-embracing forum for discussion and debate on issues pertaining to the East and West Punjab as well as the Punjabi diaspora. During the past 33 years, the PRG has provided space for academics to interact with each other regardless of territorial or disciplinary boundaries. In the inaugural address, Professor Pritam Singh, Director of the PRG, spoke of how the conference provided a platform to academics, young researchers, journalists, artists, and activists for an inter-disciplinary discussion focusing on the theme of 'Punjab: Past, Present and Future'.

Speakers, including both senior academics and PhD students, came from across the United Kingdom, as well as India and Pakistan, to present their papers on Punjab related issues pertaining to gender and family history, diaspora, masculinities, music, and religious studies. A book titled *Punjab: An Anatomy of Muslim-Sikh Politics* authored by Professor Akhtar Hussain Sandhu (University of Education, Lahore, Pakistan) was also released at the conference, and Brookes' research student Nadia Singh was delighted to be awarded the Best Doctorate Student Presentation prize for her paper 'Sikhism and Sustainability'.

## Back to the Future conference

Jane Freebody, research student from the School of History, Philosophy and Culture, had the opportunity to speak at the medical humanities conference "Back to the Future". The conference, held at Headington Hill Hall in the autumn of 2017, focused on medical humanities' contribution to the education and training of mental health professionals.

The day began with a thought-provoking keynote speech from Professor Femi Oyeboode, University of Birmingham, who warned against the "objectification of patients"; doctors tend to think in terms of "facts" but they should also consider the impact of disease on the sufferer and those closest to them. Experiencing the patient-doctor encounter and patient accounts of their condition in literature, art, theatre and cinema can help trainee medical professionals better understand the patient's perspective.

In her speech, Jane Freebody maintained that history could also make a contribution to the mental health professions. Nineteenth-century moral therapists and the early twentieth-century occupational therapists had much to teach us about developing self-esteem and a sense of usefulness, the satisfaction of growing your own food and the joy associated with creativity; all of which have resonance today.

It was a really worthwhile day providing a rare opportunity for mental health professionals and academics from the humanities to share ideas and experiences. Everyone agreed that the humanities had much to offer in the training of mental health professionals.



# Research Student and Alumni Profiles

Here, along with our regular research student profiles, we speak to one of our PhD alumni.



“I am representing the European architects in EU funded research projects on sustainable construction; supporting the projects with my expertise and disseminating the results to our member organisations. To see where EU funding goes and to ensure European SMEs get their share is now more important than ever, and I am proud to be a part of this.”

## Dr Veronika Schröpfer, Oxford Brookes' Alumna, School of the Built Environment

Before joining Oxford Brookes, I graduated from the University of Applied Sciences in Oldenburg in Germany, with a MEng in Real Estate Economics and Facilities Management (2007), and the University of Applied Sciences in Heidelberg with a Diploma in Architecture (2004). I had work experience in several architecture offices in Germany, Spain and the USA and then worked in Corporate Real Estate Management for Bosch Security Systems in Munich, before becoming a Consultant on industrial assets for Jones Lang LaSalle in Frankfurt. In October 2009, I was fortunate to be awarded a three-year PhD studentship in my exact area of research interest, by the EPSRC and Oxford Brookes University.

My research looked at how to transfer the knowledge on building sustainably between all participants, including the builders, in a sustainable office construction project, delivering office buildings to sustainable building certificate standards (BREEAM and DGNB). The focus was to find out how the different project participants shared the knowledge on how to build sustainably with each other, and determined ways of enhancement. In particular, I looked at the social network between the project participants and how this affected their knowledge exchange, as one of the main barriers preventing the built environment shifting towards a green industry standard was the diffusion of knowledge on how to build sustainably.

I used social network analyses and compared projects in Germany with similar projects in the UK. It will make a difference in the real world in lots of ways: firstly, I developed a framework that can be used to improve the transfer of knowledge in project environments; secondly, I disseminated the results to the research participants, presented the results at two conferences and published a journal paper. Finally, I now use the results in my job; to improve the transfer of knowledge on sustainable construction amongst European architects (all 600,000 of them!)

The biggest highlight was the community of PhD students within the School of the Built Environment and the School of Architecture; all areas were very close, had an international flavour and were just a great bunch of people. The support that the University offered to international students was also really good, including language support and social and networking events.

I moved to Brussels (which is an amazing city!) at the beginning of March 2014, where I started working as a Project Officer at the Architects' Council of Europe (ACE). I represent the European architects in EU funded research projects on sustainable construction, supporting the projects with my expertise and disseminating the results to our member organisations. To see where EU funding goes and to ensure European SMEs get their share is now more important than ever, and I am proud to be a part of this.



**Rachel Egloff**  
Department of English and Modern Languages

The title of my PhD is 'A Study of the Life and Works of Baroness Blaze de Bury: A Counter-narrative of Women's Involvement in Nineteenth Century European International Politics'.

When I moved to Oxford from Switzerland a few years ago, I was looking for somewhere to complete my Bachelor's Degree in English and Psychology. Both departments on the Oxford Brookes website looked very welcoming and after talking to the heads of each, I was convinced that Brookes was the right place for me.

The inspiring academic staff at Brookes then encouraged me to further pursue research and I decided to apply for a PhD in English. I wanted to stay at Brookes because of the excellent research environment, brilliant supervisors, and the unique access to resources both at the Brookes Library as well as the Bodleian.

My thesis presents evidence of female participation in the nineteenth-century discourses on (trans)national identity in the context of European international politics, using the case study of the under-researched writer Baroness Marie Pauline Rose Blaze de Bury (1813-1894). My aim is to provide a counter-narrative of women's political engagement in the nineteenth century based on a female recuperative analysis of both Blaze de Bury's life and works.

Her negotiations with the dominant hegemonic gender ideology of the time are examined through both textual and exploratory archival approaches. Blaze de Bury wrote about

European politics in a variety of genres. However, the line between her fiction (novels and short stories) and non-fiction (travel writing, memoirs, and newspaper and journal articles) is sometimes blurred. Therefore, the dissemination of her political agenda in these sometimes hybrid literary genres is inspected. These fiction and non-fiction texts are framed by historical literary and non-literary contexts that describe the European political atmosphere. Her textual negotiations with the gender ideology of the time are examined comparatively with that of other political, predominantly female, writers. Blaze is an important figure to study, not only as a writer written out of the canon but also as a female writer of 'unfeminine' international politics.

The best thing about being a research student is having the freedom to pursue my interests. I cannot imagine anything better than spending my time reading and writing about something I am passionate about. Besides my own research, I greatly enjoy the exchange with my supervisors and fellow PhD students. It is amazing to feel part of a vibrant research community within and across the faculty.

To be honest, I am enjoying this PhD so much right now that all I want to do in the future is to continue researching. I would love to stay at the University in a researcher's or lecturer's capacity; there is so much more to learn, research, and disseminate.

***Blaze is an important figure to study, not only as a writer written out of the canon but also as a female writer of 'unfeminine' international politics.***





**Pearl Akomas**  
Oxford Brookes Business School

The title of my PhD is 'An Evaluation of Relational Control in International Franchise Networks in Emerging Markets'.

My research evaluates relational control in international franchise networks in emerging markets within the hospitality sector. Business format franchising is an arrangement in which an independent franchisee, who is typically a small business owner, licenses an entire way of doing business under a brand name from a franchisor (the business format owner) for a fee. The franchisor sells not just the trade name but the processes and methods of operation of the business. Franchisees must adhere to the franchisor blueprint in order to maintain the brand image and uniformity across the franchise network, and pay on-going royalties to the franchisor in addition to the initial fee. The franchisor on the other hand assists the franchisee by providing the business know-how, training, marketing and continual support.

Franchisees generate new business ideas but the problem with them exploring their ingenuity lies with controlling their behaviour in order to maintain brand uniformity. The franchisor strives to control the franchisee in order to protect a successful brand from distortion. The franchisee on the other hand desires to adapt the business format to suit local market conditions. This generates the standardisation-adaptation tension in a typical franchise system. The issue of control becomes more complex with the existence of cultural and geographical distance between franchise partners.

How then can the standardisation-adaptation tension between international franchisors and franchisees

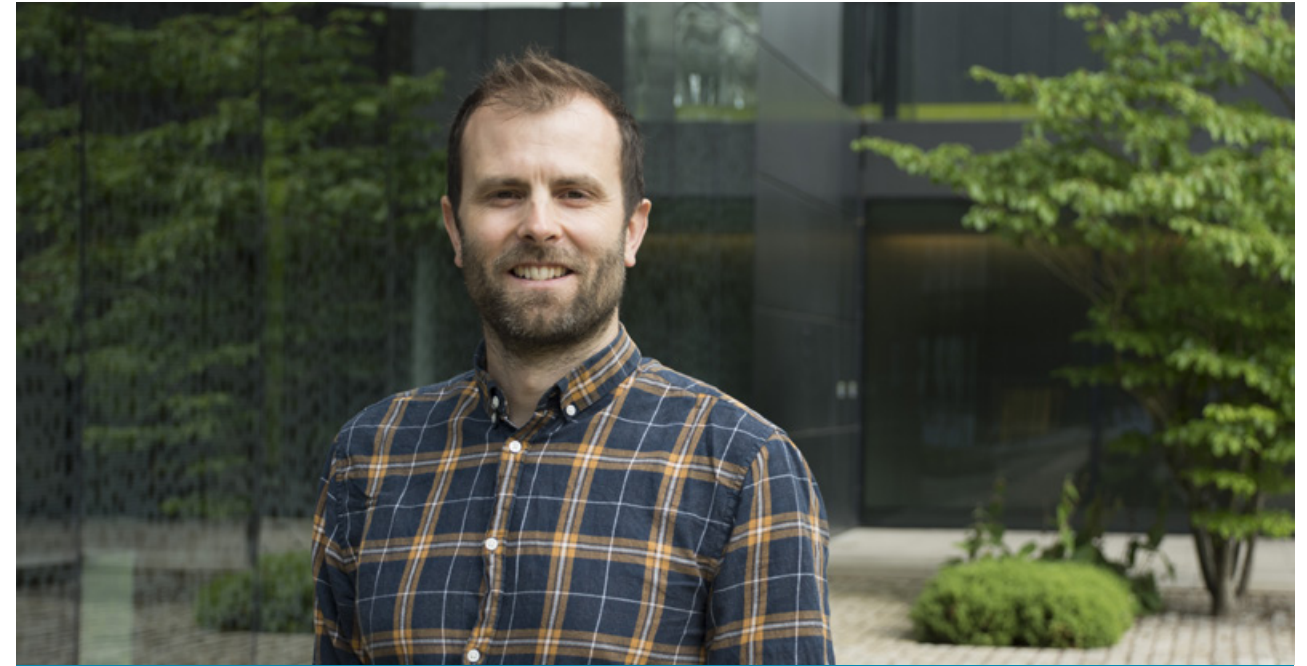
***My research seeks to make a contribution for relevant stakeholders to understand, refine and improve the relational control in international franchise systems.***

be resolved? The control challenges encountered by international franchisors bring to light the significance of relational control of a franchise system. Relational control refers to self-enforcing agreements between firms based on acceptable social norms that emerge from interpersonal or inter-group interactions motivated by the expected value of the future relationship.

There has only been limited research which has tried to investigate relational control in franchise systems across national borders and in new emerging markets. My research seeks to make a contribution for relevant stakeholders to understand, refine and improve the relational control in international franchise systems. It will also contribute to knowledge by developing an understanding of how geographically and culturally distanced franchise relationships develop.

Being a research student has afforded me the opportunity to invest my time in extensive studies aimed at addressing the problems in my research area. This being the fourth year of my research, I am writing up on my field work and beginning to feel a sense of excitement at my findings. I am looking forward to contributing to knowledge in my area of study.

Prior to commencing my PhD studies, I was teaching at a higher institution in Nigeria and, after completion of my PhD, I aim to return to teaching and researching with more enhanced skill. I look forward to spending an exciting and rewarding time researching, discovering and disseminating new knowledge through publications and presentations at conferences.



**Alex Newton**  
School of Arts

The title of my PhD is 'Liminality, the uncanny and the sublime: a practice-based exploration of thresholds of experience'.

I was, and still am, a secondary school art teacher and have lived in Oxford for almost 15 years. I completed an MA in Contemporary Art at Oxford Brookes prior to beginning my research and this played a big part in my decision to undertake my PhD at Brookes. The School of Arts is a very friendly, open and supportive place.

Understanding the approach to research in art felt new and slightly strange initially, but I settled in quickly. I really benefited from discussions with my supervisors and the group seminars, which are vital in developing my work.

My research is concerned with investigating strategies of representing or embodying the liminal; an uncertain, transitional realm where several planes or existential states may be present. I have been working predominantly with the moving image; finding ways to create experiences that have a degree of ambiguity and that at some level disorientate and dislocate.

The driving force behind this inquiry is a desire to locate strangeness and uncertainty in experience, using Viktor Shklovsky's technique of 'ostranenie' or 'defamiliarisation' as a starting point. Shklovsky posits that the purpose of art is to impede our perception of the familiar by making forms

difficult to apprehend. I am interested in exploring ways to provoke this disruption of experience.

These inquiries have since taken the form of digital recordings of the figure in strange horizonless landscapes in Iceland, the Lake District, the Peak District and also in the more comfortable surroundings of the photo studio at Brookes. More recently, I experimented with the projection of these recorded moving images onto the surface of layered screens of tulle, which provided both a sculptural presence and the illusion of a virtual space. The intangible materiality of these digital projections certainly felt like a step into the liminal domain and then subsequently translating photographs of the projected figures into stilled intaglio prints created new insights for me.

I love being in a position where I am lucky enough to have the space to indulge my curiosity and to explore my particular field of interest. The PhD art group has been incredibly helpful and provided me with a space to experience the exciting work that others are exploring as well as to reflect on various aspects of my own research.

Since commencing my MA at Brookes, I've been back at university, albeit on a part-time basis, for around four years and I've loved learning in this environment again. I don't really want to stop... although I may not say that in three years' time!

***I have been working predominantly with the moving image; finding ways to create experiences that have a degree of ambiguity and that at some level disorientate and dislocate.***





**Emma Pascale Blakey**  
Department of Nursing

The title of my PhD is 'Optimising the role of the nurse in reducing unplanned readmissions to hospital among people aged 65 years and over'.

After completing my nursing degree at Oxford Brookes in 2015, I had the exciting opportunity to become part of the Oxford Institute of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Research (OxINMAHR), where I would be able to continue with clinical work whilst also undertaking a PhD.

Readmissions to hospital within 30 days of discharge continue to rise in the UK and internationally, especially among people aged 65 years and over. Returning to hospital can have an impact on health and wellbeing, of both the person coming back to hospital and their care givers or loved ones. It can also hinder other care within the hospital and is costly to the NHS. Many different things are said to cause readmission to hospital; for example, problems with the care received during the initial hospital visit or because more support was needed once the individual had left hospital. At the moment we do not know enough about the experiences of people being readmitted, nor what is important to them.

This study aims to address this by interviewing people who have been readmitted to one hospital trust in England. They will have the option of being interviewed in hospital or at home. They will also be able to suggest the researcher speak to other people significant to them, and they will be asked to show any paperwork or information they were given by the hospital when they first left.

***Readmissions to hospital within 30 days of discharge continue to rise in the UK and internationally, especially among people aged 65 years and over.***

The transition to research student has been both a challenging and exciting experience. Being based in OxINMAHR HQ, I have access to academic and pastoral support and an encouraging working environment. I have PhD student colleagues here and we regularly meet to discuss each other's projects and ideas, which is invaluable. We are also extremely lucky to have visiting Professors and Scholars who come from around the world to deliver inspiring lectures and workshops.

I have attended a variety of useful workshops at Brookes, including sessions delivered by the specialist healthcare librarians, sessions on managing stress and relaxation techniques, and OxINMAHR have provided workshops on how to develop and maintain a social media profile as a doctoral student.

I love being able to read, think, and discuss issues that are central to nursing theory and practice, and that are influential to patient care. As a clinical academic, I understand research in the context of clinical work. Simultaneously I can reflect on my clinical work in light of the research and evidence I read. Being in this position is an absolute privilege. In the future I would love to be able to use both my clinical and research skills in a role and I'm sure there will be many exciting possibilities in nursing!



**Somhatai Timsard**  
Oxford Brookes Business School

The title of my PhD is 'Consumers and role of social media in consumption of cosmetic products in Thailand'.

I first heard about Oxford Brookes while studying a bachelor's degree in Business at Mahidol University International College, an international partner institution of Oxford Brookes University. I decided to pursue my master's degree here and completed it in 2012. Having had a great experience whilst studying for my master's, I decided to continue with PhD studies at Brookes.

I had always been passionate about cosmetics and I spent a lot of time on social media. I realised that there were days I hadn't turned on my TV because I had spent my time on social media instead; researching cosmetics and watching online reviews for several hours a day, every day. I followed beauty bloggers' recommendations and reviews and bought whatever they mentioned. It got me to the point where I started to question myself 'Why did I believe people I hadn't met before and why did I trust them?' Additionally my mum asked me randomly 'Why are teenagers these days so good at applying cosmetics?' When she was a teenager, there wasn't a strong need for cosmetics and she didn't even know how to apply it. This question inspired me to start my research.

The purpose of my research is to evaluate the role of social media in understanding the consumption of cosmetic products in Thailand. The number of social media users

(SMUs) is increasing rapidly and although consumers' motivations have been studied, research on the consumption behaviour of SMUs in relation to cosmetic products is limited, and the factors that make social media channels, such as YouTube, popular remain unknown. Importantly, social media's arrival has created a shift. It has turned the private and limited realm of skills and behaviour of cosmetic users into an open, shared and community-based realm. Ultimately, my research aims to develop an evidence-based framework of the influence of social media on social media users' cosmetic consumption behaviour in Thailand.

Being a research student is a great opportunity to research a topic I am passionate about; to gain a deeper understanding and contribute to knowledge in the field of study. After finishing my PhD, I plan to apply for jobs outside academia to gain experience in the beauty industry before pursuing a teaching career. As my research is practical and dynamic, getting into the beauty industry and applying what I have learnt and gained from this research into the business world would enable me to have complete aspects of industry and theories, in order to widen teaching contexts for students in the future.

For more current research student profiles please visit: [www.brookes.ac.uk/graduate-college/student-profiles](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/graduate-college/student-profiles)

***Social media's arrival has created a shift. It has turned the private and limited realm of skills and behaviour of cosmetic users into an open, shared and community-based realm.***



# Stay connected

Brookes has a strong and vibrant research student community. Here are just some of the ways you can stay in touch.



## Graduate College Annual Research Student Exhibition

Come and join us in celebrating the extensive display of work submitted by our research students, either as an exhibitor or if you are interested in finding out more about doing a research degree at Brookes.

**Wednesday 2 May, 10am – 5.30pm**

**THE FORUM, JOHN HENRY BROOKES BUILDING, GIPSY LANE SITE**

The display will also be available to view on Thursday 3 May 2018.

If you would like more information, please go to [www.brookes.ac.uk/students/research-degrees-team/current-students/graduate-college/events/annual-event/](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/research-degrees-team/current-students/graduate-college/events/annual-event/) or email: [asa-gcevents@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:asa-gcevents@brookes.ac.uk)

## Research Student Web Forum

The Oxford Brookes Research Student Forum is a Google Groups web forum where you can chat and network with other research students at Brookes. It is a student-led forum so please feel free to ask a question or start a new discussion.

You can join the Research Student Forum now at <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/brookes-research-students>

 Follow us on Twitter @BrookesGC



## Guided Tour of the Bodleian Library

On Tuesday 7 November, a group of 26 research students attend a guided tour of the Bodleian Library. Everyone met in the Café at the Weston Library for tea, coffee and pastries; a great opportunity to chat and network. After a short walk over to Divinity School, the group was split into two and assigned tour guides. Amplifiers were provided so the guides could talk quietly (without disturbing the students studying) and everyone could still hear clearly.

The tour covered Divinity School, Duke Humphreys Library, the iconic Radcliffe Camera and the Gladstone Link. Both the tour guides, Matthew and Jean, were really knowledgeable and imparted a very thorough history of the Bodleian Library. There was lots of great discussion generated and feedback from the event was very positive:

"I had a great time. Jean was a brilliant tour guide - very informative and amusing." *Cara Law, Department of Psychology, Health and Professional Development*

"I thoroughly enjoyed the event at the Bodleian, a real treat. Jean was sensational and made us all laugh when she broke a door handle, carrying it around ringing like a bell for the rest of the tour! I shall remember the whole event for a long time." *Ross Brooks, School of History, Philosophy and Culture.*

## Social and Networking Events

The Graduate College aims to nurture and encourage a community among its research students at Brookes. Several activities are run throughout each year to enable you to network with likeminded students and share ideas.

Here are the events currently scheduled for this year:

**3 Minute Thesis Event  
Wednesday 7 February,  
10.00am to 2.00pm**

**Research Student  
Breakfast Seminar  
Tuesday 20 March,  
9.30am to 12.00pm**

**Graduate College  
Annual Research  
Student Exhibition  
Wednesday 2 May,  
10.00am to 5.30pm**

**Guided Tour and Picnic  
at the Oxford Botanic  
Gardens  
Thursday 7 June, from  
11.00am**

Further details will be circulated via email, or you can check for updates on events at any time at <http://www.brookes.ac.uk/graduate-college/events/>

For upcoming Graduate College Events please visit: [www.brookes.ac.uk/graduate-college/events](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/graduate-college/events)

# Spotlight on Research

Follow the research journey of one of Brookes' PhD students.



## MAMDOOH ALZYOOD, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences

Before my PhD, I worked for a year as a Staff Nurse at the Adult Intensive Care Unit and then for another year as an Emergency Staff Nurse. I had to develop my understanding in the area of infection control and this was made possible when I undertook my master's degree in Infection Prevention and Control at Oxford Brookes in 2012. I was aware of the outstanding nursing education that Oxford Brookes provides for future nurses and my first impression of the University was marvellous, especially with regard to the education and support I received as an international student.

I then started exploring the field of health care management, and undertook a master's in Health Care Management at North West College Reading in 2014. I worked with Marion Waite running a postgraduate dissertation writing group as part of the Faculty of Health and Life Sciences at Brookes, as well as working for a year as an International Students Welfare Officer at City College Oxford, and for two years as an Admission Team Member at the International Group for Educational Services.

Being a former postgraduate student here was my main motivation for choosing Oxford Brookes as a place for a more advanced degree and this would not be possible without the support of my master's supervisor Marion Waite, the spectacular support of Professor Debra Jackson and the ultimate supervision of Dr Helen Aveyard. Furthermore, Brookes has a great atmosphere to undertake research in health care studies, in particular the support group, seminars and workshops that the Oxford Institute of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Research (OxINMAHR) provides. I started my doctoral studies here in 2015 and the title of my PhD is

'The role of patients' involvement in promoting hand hygiene among nurses in the hospital setting'.

The aim of my study is to understand the role of patients' involvement in promoting hand hygiene among nurses in the hospital setting. Globally, the Centres for Disease Control reported that 1 in 25 hospitalised patients acquire at least one healthcare-associated infection on a daily basis. Irrespective of middle to high income or low resource country context, it is estimated that the risk to acquire healthcare-associated infection remains a very real danger around the globe. Improving hand hygiene compliance among healthcare workers is recognised as one of the most effective ways of reducing the risk of healthcare-associated infections. However, in most healthcare institutions, it is estimated that only 40% of health care workers adhere to recommended hand hygiene guidelines.

Clinical nurses (registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, and certified nursing assistants) are the most frequent healthcare personnel who are in contact with patients and their surrounds in the hospital care environment. Therefore, the role played by nurses is pivotal in minimising the risk of transmitting microorganisms, not only from patient to patient but also between healthcare workers. The role of patient involvement in minimising the risk of healthcare-associated infections through hand hygiene programmes for healthcare workers has not been fully researched. However, it is often suggested that patients should be involved in their care and that they have the right or even a responsibility to inform nurses of any possible errors or adverse events.

One of the concerns of having patients involved in priming healthcare workers to perform hand hygiene is the possible adverse effect on the patient-nurse relationship. Maybe as a result, patients' willingness to remind the healthcare workers to perform hand hygiene is relatively low. Therefore, it is important that healthcare workers welcome patient involvement in hand hygiene and do not feel threatened by this approach, and that patients feel comfortable in doing so.

Based on these arguments and following a review of the literature, the first study will use focus groups to explore nurses' views, attitudes and experiences if service users ask them to perform hand hygiene. The second study will collect data from service users who have experience of reminding nurses to perform hand hygiene through the use of critical incident study. Finally, effective hand hygiene promotion strategies could be revealed as part of national and international efforts to enhance hand hygiene compliance among healthcare workers via increased patient involvement.

Finishing my PhD is my top priority. I aim to produce a high-quality piece of academic work along with a strong personal and professional development profile giving me the chance to pursue a career in academia or clinical research in the area of nursing combined with infection control.



# COME TO A POSTGRADUATE STUDY FAIR

A research degree qualification can help you to develop your career, pursue a passion, or build the knowledge and skills to get you back into the workplace.

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